THE THIRD ABBOT OF DRYBURGH

By the Rev. James Bulloch, B.D.

Beautiful even in ruin, the broken walls of Dryburgh Abbey still stand in a bend of Tweed, a memorial to the spiritual and aesthetic life which raised them, and a visible tribute to the quality of Scottish monasticism in the Middle Ages. Other testimony, indeed, is none too plentiful, for the records which tell of more than superficial things are all too scanty. "The intellectual and artistic condition," says a modern Scottish Historian in a discussion of the mid twelfth century, "is difficult to assess, for the only relic of that side of the time's life is what is left of ecclesiastical building . . . . With literature we come up against a wall. The fact that none survives does not mean that there was none . . ." It is rather curious that the literary evidences for the character of religious life in the Scotland of the time should so largely have been ignored.

Under the rule of the sons of Margaret the full tide of mediaeval monasticism began to flow into Scotland. In 1136 the Cistercians settled at Melrose. Benedictines multiplied and prospered. At Scone, Inchcolm, S. Andrews, and elsewhere the Austin Canons had settled and, paradoxically, brought to the religious life of Scotland a new impulse at the very moment when, on the continent, it was felt that their discipline and life called for renewal. Totally distinct from the monks of S. Benedict, in their way of life the Black Canons combined the discipline of the regulated life within a community with effective service given to the Church in the parochial life among the laity. Continental efforts at reformation appeared and among them perhaps the most prominent and successful was that of S. Norbert.[1] Born at Xanten in the Rhineland about 1080, Norbert became an Austin Canon, but in contrast with his wealthier brethren he adopted poverty and turned to the task of preaching the Gospel to the laity. His biographer tells of him setting out in the Spring time to preach in the farms and villages before the Winter frosts had completely vanished from the ground. Finding it necessary to obtain papal support for his work Norbert obtained a general licence to preach and a dispensation to cover his irregular ordination from Pope Gelasius II, but within a few months Gelasius had died at Cluny in January 1119. Norbert approached the newly elected Calixtus II and obtained a renewal of his licence together with counsel to moderation. By Christmas Day, 1121, Norbert found

[1] *Vita Norberti M.G.H. Scriptorum*, xii, 1856, pp. 663, *et seq.* *Vita S. Norberti*, Migne. *P.L.* clxx, Cols. 1253-1344.

himself at the head of a community of some forty clergy, besides some laymen, in his first house of Premontre. There they lived, dressed in white, under the Austin Rule. Their mother house was to be a refuge for ascetic clergy, but when Norbert became Archbishop of Magdeburg in 1126 he found a secularised Church bordering upon a heathen land which cried out for evangelism ; naturally he turned for aid to the canons of Premontre who now should serve him as missionaries and as parish priests.

A score or so of years after its foundation the Order made its first English settlement at Newhouse in Lincolnshire in or about 1143. This is the date given by the Melrose chronicler, but some English sources[1] place it a couple of years later. Thence the White Canons spread rapidly. In S. Bernard's "Life of S. Malachi" we read[2] that in 1148 Bishop Malachi came from Ulster to Galloway and founded an Abbey at Viride Stagnum ; it appears from S. Bernard that the foundation was Cistercian, but soon after when Sedes Animarum of Soulseat—to give the house its more familiar title—again appears, it had become Premonstratensian, and so it remained. Apart from this uncertain case, the first Scottish foundation was at Dryburgh to which, the *Chronicle of Melrose*[3] tells us, they came on 10 November, 1150. Two years later, on S. Lucy's Day, Saturday, 13 December, 1152, the same *Chronicle* relates that "the convent came to Dryburgh and Roger became the first Abbot." David I, on the grounds of his foundation charter, has been reckoned the founder, but the credit might more correctly be assigned to Hugo de Morville. The original date of 10 November, 1150, no doubt is that of the original donation and the later date of 13 December, 1152, that of the actual settlement of the new community. They had come from Alnwick in Northumberland, itself only founded in 1148.

There are few references to the first Abbot in our records. The Chartulary of Melrose contains his name as witness to a charter of confirmation made by the Archdeacon and clergy of Lothian, and there are three bulls addressed to him by Pope Alexander III. Under the year 1177 the *Chronicle of Melrose*[4] reads: "Roger, the first Abbot of Dryburgh resigned the charge of the sheep ; and the Prior Gerard succeeded him in the ministry." A bull[5] of Lucius II, issued on 8 May, 1184, is directed to the Abbot Gerard and makes specific provision for the presentation of Canons of Dryburgh to the vicarages of their churches. This development was scarcely a misuse of the Order, as it had been an early function of Norbert's followers. As to Gerard's successor, the

[1] *The White Canons in England*, H. M. Colvin, p. 39.
[2] *Vita S. Malachiae. Acta Sanctorum*, Nov., vol. ii, pt. i, p. 164.
[3] *Chronicle of Melrose*, p. 74. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 88.
[5] *Liber de Dryburgh*, 194.

editor of the *Liber de Dryburgh* wrote in his preface that " Richard was probably the third Abbot," and this has generally been accepted by later Scottish writers. They had overlooked a statement by Adam of Eynsham[1] in which he speaks of a friend of S. Hugh who was a monk of Witham, "a man, I might almost say, of incomparable learning and doctrine in divine things, who had resigned an abbacy of the Premonstratensian Order which he held ; he was called Master Adam of Dryburgh."

Adam had not been at all unknown to Scottish writers, though he had not been associated with Dryburgh. In Dempster, Camerarius, Mackenzie, and others, his name will be found and some brief accounts of his writings. On 17 November, 1922, Professor J. H. Baxter, delivering his inaugural address at S. Andrews, drew attention to some unsolved problems in Scottish Church History.[2] "Interest ought to be easily gained," he said, "for a servant of God under Walter, the second Prior of S. Andrew's Priory, who has left writings of no small bulk and no small value. Adam Scot, Premonstratensian, sometime Abbot of Whithorn, holds his own place of honour and distinction in a century made famous by such men as S. Bernard, Peter Lombard, Anselm, Richard of S. Victor, John of Salisbury, and Orderic Vital. His *Soliloquium de Instructione Animae* was deemed not unworthy of Adam of S. Victor himself, and is attributed to him, indeed, not only by three manuscripts known to me, but expressly by the seventeenth century critic Pez. Our Adam Scot has left enough material to show his interest and value ; he has a place among scholastic philosophers ; to Scottish history he has some references, which you will find mentioned in the article on him in the *Dictionary of National Biography* ; to religious life in our land about the year 1180 he bears precious, though unexamined, witness . . . What better task could one of our own number undertake than the restoration to his proper place and honour of our early townsman and fellow-Christian ? Manuscripts might be found, the text edited, and a translation made ; then, I venture to predict, Adam Scot will be recognised as having more than an antiquarian interest ; he can teach us a way of contemplation and piety which would add to our own worship the sweetness, winsomeness, and charm that breathe yet from his forgotten but living pages." This appeal has been answered in the succeeding years, but not by Scottish scholars.

The writings of Adam first appeared in print in 1518 in a folio edition issued at Paris by Aegidius Gourmont. This folio contained a number of sermons, and two treatises entitled *Liber de Tripartito Tabernaculo*

[1] *Magna Vita S. Hugonis*, p. 201.

[2] *Theology*, vol. 6, 1923, p.p 69-83.

and *Liber de Triplici Genere Contemplationis*. I have not been able to see a copy of this edition. It is to be noted that xxiv sermons are mentioned in the *Patrologia*, but that this is almost certainly an error for the xiv of the *De Ordine* of the next edition. In 1659 a Flemish White Canon, Godefridus Ghiselbertus,[1] edited, and Peter Bellerus of Antwerp published, a new edition containing 47 sermons, a *Liber de Ordine, Habitu, et Professione Canonicorum Ordinis Premonstratensis*, divided into 14 sermons, being capitular discourses like the Strenae of Adam Elder, and the treatises, *De Tripartito Tabernaculo* and *De Triplici Genere Contemplationis*. Gourmont has ascribed the writings to Brother Adam of the Premonstratensian Order. His new editor ascribed them to Adamus Scotus. The editor in the *Patrologia* calls him Abbot of Whithorn and Bishop. In its title the *De Ordine* is ascribed to Adam. The *De Tripartito Tabernaculo* contains a claim to the authorship of the *De Ordine*, and the writer of the *De Triplici Genere Contemplationis* lays claim to the *De Tripartito Tabernaculo*. In the latter treatise we learn that the author was at work in 1180. According to the editor, the manuscripts sometimes call our writer Adamus Scotus, sometimes Adamus Anglicus, and sometimes Anglo-Scotus. The treatise is clearly the work of a man who, about 1180, was writing in Scotland at a Premonstratensian Abbey, yet strongly under English influence. Thus, he publishes lists of the Scottish and English kings, and advises his copyists to insert whatever lists may be more appropriate for themselves. He traces the royal house of England back to Adam, but, on the other hand, he shows personal knowledge of the characters of the members of the Scottish royal house, and informs his readers that he is writing in the land of the English and the kingdom of the Scots. Further, he has dedicated his work to John, the Abbot of Kelso, who held office from 1160 until 1180. Ghiselbert proceeded to identify his writer with Adam, the Premonstratensian Abbot of Soulseat, who appeared in the records of the Order as having been appointed the first Prior of Whithorn in 1177[2] when under Christian, Bishop of Candida Casa, the chapter there was reconstituted as Premonstratensian. Adam is stated to have acted as curator and administrator of the see when the Bishop was under excommunication, no doubt a reference to the excommunication of Christian consequent upon his refusal to attend the council held by the Legate Vivian at Edinburgh on 1 August, 1177, on the grounds that he was a suffragan of York. This identification of Adam of Soulseat and Whithorn with our author is ruled out by the fact that the day of his death as given in the Necrology of Premontre is different from that which will later be shown to be that of our author.

[1] Cf. *P. L.*, 198.
[2] *P. L.*, 198, 27.

The name of Adam[1] was surprisingly common among Premonstratensians in these islands. Thus in the twelfth century there was an Abbot Adam at Alnwick, at Barlings in Lincolnshire there was another from 1154 until 1156, at Croxton in Leicestershire from 1203 until 1220, at Torre in Devon from 1196 until 1199, and thereafter at Newhouse in Lincolnshire, at Sulby in Northamptonshire about 1200, and at Welbeck in Nottinghamshire from 1183 until 1194. Thus confusion was almost inevitable.

In the Premonstratensian house of S. Michael at Antwerp Ghiselbertus found another account of Adam which stated that he was born of noble parents in "Anglo-Scotia" and was "a contemporary of the first fathers of the Premonstratensian Order." The second half of this statement is impossible unless, as is perhaps the case, it merely refers to the fathers of the Order in Scotland. The 47 sermons published by Ghiselbertus are described by the editor as a section of 100 sermons, of which 14 are addressed to men in religious orders. Oudin[2] tells that when he himself was a young student at the Abbey of Coussi near Laon he often had in his hands a manuscript containing 114 sermons, of which he identified the first 47 with those published by Ghiselbertus. He further states that copies of the remaining sermons were in the hands of Herman a Porta, Abbot of S. Michael's at Antwerp, and in the library of the Coelestines at Mantes, where they were ascribed to Brother Adam the Premonstratensian, being commonly read aloud during meal hours. Both Herman a Porta and the Coelestines possessed manuscripts of a book entitled *Libellus Adami Premonstratensis, natione Anglici, De Instructione Animae.* This latter work was published in 1721 by Pez[3] from another source. In its prologue it is dedicated to Walter, Prior of S. Andrews in Scotland, by Brother Adam, "*servorum Dei servus,*" the phrase paradoxically indicating high rank. Walter[4] held office as Prior from 1160 until 1186 and again, after a brief interval, until 1195 at least. Ghiselbertus also mentions a work by Adam entitled *De Dulcedine Dei* and a volume of letters. The former was traced by Pez in a fifteenth century catalogue and he also claimed for our author a set of Latin verses entitled *Summula.*

The 47 sermons printed by Ghiselbertus were reprinted by Migne in 1855 in Volume 198 of the *Patrologia Latina,* along with the *De Ordine, De Tripartito Tabernaculo, De Triplici Genere Contemplationis,* and the *Soliloquium De Instructione Animae.* A Sermon on Palm Sunday, found

[1] F. A. Gasquet, *Collectanea Anglo-Premonstratensia, passim.*

[2] C. Oudin, *Commentarius de Scriptoribus Ecclesiae Antiquis,* vol. 2.

[3] Pez, *Thesaurus Anecdotorum Novissimus,* Vol. 1, p. 1, col. 395. *P. L.,* 198, 843-872.

[4] *Registrum Prioratus Sancti Andree,* p. xxx. *Chronicle of Melrose,* p. 77.

in Volume 184 of the *Patrologia*, also belongs to Adam. In 1901 W. de Gray Birch published for the Marquis of Bute a volume of Adam's sermons transcribed from a Rouen manuscript under the title *Sermones Fratris Adae.* Fourteen sermons, seven of which are included in the former volume, were published by Francois Petit at Antwerp in 1934 under the title *Ad Viros Religiosos.*

Considering how little was accurately known regarding Adam's life, it is remarkable how much was written about him, especially by Ghiselbertus in his preface where many bricks are made with little straw. For more accurate information we are indebted to Miss E. Margaret Thomson.[1] In addition to these printed works of Adam there is in this island in the London Charterhouse a manuscript volume of his sermons, most of them already published in the above mentioned volumes. At the close of the volume is an extract entitled *De Vita et Conversatione Magistri Ade Carthusiensis secundum quod habetur in cronica domus de Witham.* Of the work mentioned, nothing else is known to remain, but we have here preserved an authentic account of Adam. It was written by one of the Witham monks who had known him intimately for ten years, and is stamped with every mark of reliability and authenticity.

According to this writer, Adam was born on the borders of England and Scotland, "*parentum mediocrum proles illustris.*" The meaning of the phrase has been disputed. For my part, I consider that the reference is to the middle rank in society and that Adam was thus the son of a family of smaller land-owners. Had he come from one of the greater houses the fact would have been remembered and recorded, and—though it is a matter of opinion—I cannot imagine that any member of the working class in Scotland at that time could have entered the ranks of the White Canons. If so, he would have come from a family similar to that of David de Bernham, another famed son of Berwickshire from which county, as it appears elsewhere, Adam came. As a boy he was devoted to study and at once showed unusual distinction, far surpassing his companions. As he came to manhood he displayed an agile mind and a ready tongue in academic exercise and debate. "*Fuit nempe in sententiis subtilus, providus in responsis, in rei proposite diffinitione discretus.*"[2] Later mediaeval writers claimed that he was a student at Paris.[3] In the *Witham Chronicle* there is no confirmation of this, but the general phrases used cannot exclude the possibility. When writing the *De Tripartito Tabernaculo* he indicated that he had already visited France, but whether for

[1] *A Fragment of a Witham Charterhouse Chronicle* and Adam of Dryburgh. E. Margaret Thompson, *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, Vol. 16, No. 2, July, 1932.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 18. [3] Budinsky.

study alone, or for the purposes of his Order, does not appear. A number of Scots were already in Paris, particularly among the Victorines, and if the knowledge displayed by Adam was obtainable in his native land at the time, the fact is a portent which might cause us to revise our estimates of contemporary Scottish education and culture. On the other hand, I consider it certain that some writers have confused him with the fourteenth century Adamus Carthusianus or Anglicus, associated with the Vita Minor Sancti Hugonis.

He was early marked out for a career of distinction, but, in his biographer's phrase, "drew back his foot at the threshold." It would appear that he had intended to enter the ranks of the secular clergy, devoting himself to law with results similar to those later achieved by that other son of the Merse, David de Bernham. There had recently been founded in his own county—and it is this phrase which indicates his county—the Premonstratensian Abbey of Dryburgh. Here he came as a novice and was as notable in the devotional life as he had been in the scholastic —marked by that virtue so rare in able young men, humility. He was generally beloved. His time was spent in the memorising of the offices, the study of Scripture and of Theology . . . "*divine pagine lectioni et doctrine.*" A comparison is drawn between him and the Venerable Bede by his biographer. At 25 years of age[1] he was ordained to the priesthood, being regarded as sage beyond his years. The words might suggest that it was not customary to ordain the White Canons at so early an age.

With increasing study his name became known outside the walls of Dryburgh and throughout the Borders. In height he was of middle stature, with good looks, a ready wit, a cheerful tongue, and good manners which secured him a ready access to different types of men. His contemporaries were particularly taken by his intellectual powers, the ability to grasp and elucidate the essentials of complex problems, and the peculiar persuasiveness of his oratory. He had an excellent memory; anything once learned was never forgotten, and he possessed the happy knack of being able to draw upon his stores at a moment's need. Such qualities made him an excellent preacher, both in capitular assembly and before the public . . . "*ei in collationibus aut cursu sermonis, ut dici solet, omnia ad manum necessaria promptissime ministraret.*" Such was his reputation as a preacher that he was taken out by the Abbot of Dryburgh to preach both in churches and monasteries. It would thus seem that he preached to popular audiences in the vernacular in parish churches as well as in Latin in the Chapters. Such was the intention of the founder of his Order. "*Sive literatis sive illiteratis loqueretur, mirum*

[1] *Fragment of Witham Chronicle*, p. 19.

in modum eruditus et eloquens apparebat, et predicatio tam pondere sententiarum quam puritate verborum placens erat et efficax."

After some years the Abbot of Dryburgh became incapacitated. Evidently his life was not in imminent danger, although approaching its close, but he was totally unable to take any effective part in the management of the house. It would be consistent with the scanty evidence to suggest that a paralytic stroke had deprived Gerard of speech and the power of walking. It was necessary to appoint a successor and Adam was unanimously elected. As the election was fully canonical he undertook the full care and administration of the house, but as his predecessor was still alive—"*abbate suo superstite et connivente*" is the phrase—he refused to receive yet the episcopal benediction. Not humility is given as the reason, but affection. "*Erat eis cor unum et anima una in Deo.*"

At this time his reputation had already reached distant Premontre. Not having been episcopally consecrated he was not among those summoned to Premontre for the annual Chapter General, that privilege belonging to his invalid predecessor; but as the Abbots of the Order returned from one of the Chapters they brought him a personal summons from the head of the Order to present himself at once at Premontre. This he did, and was received with great honour both by Abbot and Convent. There he stayed some time, much engaged in scholarly discussion with learned men regarding Scripture and Theology, and frequently preaching. His reputation rapidly rose. His biographer gives as evidence that the house being short of wine at the time Adam, whether he dined at the Abbot's table or in the Refectory, was always served with plenty of wine. During his stay the Abbot set out on one of the preaching tours still continuing in the Order. It was a mark of special distinction that Adam was taken with him as the preacher; thus he preached in religious houses, cities, and smaller towns throughout France. There was a deep impression. "All that heard him," says the biographer in New Testament language, "were astonished at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth."

In the course of their travels they came to the Charterhouse of Val S. Pierre. Strictest of all the orders, the Carthusian Order had been founded a century earlier by S. Bruno, a former Chancellor of Rheims, earnest and ascetic, but alienated by the naked worldliness of two successive Archbishops. When he first settled amid the mountainous solitude of the Grand Chartreuse among his few companions were a theologian of Lucca and two canons of S. Ruf, members of a strictly reformed congregation of the Austin Canons which influenced S. Norbert also. Members of a clerical society with many gradations between a worldly occupation

of the most valuable benefices and a spirituality which turned its back upon the world, they exemplified the continual tendency of the early Middle ages to seek poverty, discipline, and devotion stricter than the existing Orders afforded. In an age of mingled brutality and idealism the austerity of the Carthusian Order exercised a magnetism over the minds of men. Twelve monks and a Prior dwelt in this retreat, each working, sleeping, and eating within his solitary cell, their one luxury being a good library from which a couple of books were always in each monk's cell for his perusal. Peter the Venerable[1] mentions in a letter a number of the authors upon their shelves—S. Ambrose, S. Gregory Nazianen, and S. Chrysostom, S. Hilary on the Psalms, Prosper against Cassian. A volume of the epistles of S. Augustine and of S. Jerome had been devoured by a bear. Thus devotion and study were the sole compensations in a life of utter austerity, and for many minds, committed to existing Orders, but deeply dissatisfied with that compromise which so easily assailed them, and restless for abnegation, there was a strong attraction in the iron discipline of the Charterhouse.

The Carthusian Order had now become widely known for the first time and had awakened considerable interest among the religious Orders as well as among the laity. For this interest, Adam's biographer[2] states, two men were mainly responsible, the one being S. Hugh of Lincoln and the other the man whom Adam was now to meet, being none other than his own predecessor Roger, the first Abbot of Dryburgh. The words of the Melrose Chronicler, generally interpreted as speaking of the death of Abbot Roger, carry a very different significance indeed. He had left the care of the sheep of Christ in a different sense, abandoning his Order and his house to become a simple Carthusian. After considerable labour the small party reached this solitary retreat. To Adam it made an immediate appeal. Like so many men of his age he had been torn in two directions. His life and writings exhibit that urgent sense of the need for Christian evangelism in the rough world outside, but his inward feelings had long ached for the life of retreat and of utter devotion. They had left other human habitations far behind in a withdrawn valley. Noting the eternal silence of the hills around, the strange stillness of the wide courtyard with its circuit of small cells, Adam stood spellbound. "This is none other," he exclaimed, "than the house of God. This is the gate of Heaven. How much to be revered and honoured is this Carthusian Order!" They were received with a kiss. The brethren assembled to hear him preach and then departed to their cells again. The visitors returned down the valley, but not before Adam had had a

[1] *P. L.*, 153, col. 594.

[2] *Fragment of a Witham Chronicle*, p. 20.

private conversation with his old master, Roger, once Abbot of Dryburgh. The contents of the conversation are not recorded, but must be judged from subsequent events.

Adam's mind was filled with uncertainty and hestitation, not at what he has to do, for that was already determined, but as to how he was to do it. To attempt to abandon the Premonstratensian Order in France where the Order's arm was far reaching and almost under the very eyes of the Abbot of Premontre himself, whose guest he was, would be an invitation to trouble. He therefore petitioned for leave to return home. This was granted; Adam landed in England but, instead of returning to Scotland, he made straight for Lincoln and its Bishop.

Now S. Hugh was not merely the occupant of one of the greatest of the English sees, but a personality of vigour and determination whose strong word had called even a Plantagenet King to order, and he was a churchman whose reputation for holiness had already thrown around his shoulders the mantle of sanctity. Hugh of Avalon was himself a son of the Grand Chartreuse. As part of his penance for the death of Becket, Henry II had commenced the foundation of a Charterhouse at Witham[1] in Somerset. Dom Le Couteulx tells that in 1178 the Prior of the Grande Chartreuse despatched to England a monk named Narbert and two conversi, Gerard and Ainard, the latter a personality of fiery vigour who, after expulsion from the Grande Chartreuse for refusal to lead a settlement in Denmark, returned in penitence, stood for a night in penance outside the gate in the Alpine snows, was re-admitted, and then sent on the English mission. At Witham few preparations had been made for their coming. Henry's penitence was limited where money was concerned and he had no mind to incur the expenses involved in the keeping of his promise, while the local rustics cared little for men whose speech they understood little and whose ways they understood less. Narbert, the first Prior, returned discouraged. Hamon, his successor, died soon after his arrival at Witham. In 1180 there came a man of a different stamp, none less than S. Hugh himself. All that he found on arrival was a collection of straggling timber cells enclosed by a ditch and a palisade and inhabited by a handful of discouraged recluses. We are not here concerned with the record of S. Hugh's administration at Witham. Let it be sufficient to say that he conciliated the local people, called the King to order, and established the house upon a sure foundation both financially and devotionally. Even after he had been consecrated to the see of Lincoln S. Hugh retained control of the Witham community. On his successor proving unsatisfactory he was summarily dismissed by the

[1] *Le Couteulx, Annales Ordinis Carthusiensis*, ii, pp. 449-452.

imperious Bishop and in his place there was appointed Bovo, a monk of the Grande Chartreuse. Some churchmen of standing felt the appeal of the new community and withdrew to it.

Of all this Adam was well aware. Hugh was a man of holiness, a power in the land both spiritually and temporally ; he was strong willed and determined enough to protect a protege ; moreover, he was still the superior of Witham, and he had not only been a Carthusian himself, but, in his youth, he too had abandoned an Order, the Austin Canons, to enter the Chartreuse. So to S. Hugh Adam went and to him he opened his heart. It was not the first time that the Bishop had listened to such confessions. He heard sympathetically and gave warrant to Adam to enter Witham. Thus, armed with letters from S. Hugh, Adam set off for Somerset where he presented himself to the Prior and the brethren. He was received into the lower house, the only part of the buildings then complete. Greeted with a kiss of peace, he was admitted to the cloister and, after an interval, invited to preach, which he did upon the text, "*Ecce, elongavi fugiens et mansi in solitudine.*" Evidently he preached extempore for Master Eustace, one of the brethren, sought and obtained permission to write down the sermon. Thereafter Adam produced the letters of the Bishop of Lincoln ; for the first time he revealed to them the object of his coming, and found himself accepted with joy. Thereupon he gave directions to his suite to return to Scotland and to deliver at Dryburgh his belongings and the report of the step now taken. Thus he said farewell to the world, sending with his servants a message of farewell to all whom he had known and loved. He was assigned a cell and a habit and betook himself to the usual life of a Carthusian monk.

So four or five months passed. Meantime there was consternation at Dryburgh. Word was hurriedly sent to Premontre. The Chapter General met with the result that there descended upon the little community of Witham the full wrath of Premontre. A messenger arrived in Somerset armed with powers of excommunication should Adam fail to return, or the community to deliver him, within the space of twelve months. The news overwhelmed the victim. From this despair he was roused by the arrival of S. Hugh, who was in the custom of observing an annual retreat at his former abode. The Bishop told him to set free his mind from worry and to leave the case in his hands.

S. Hugh was a man to respect in many ways and a man to be feared as well as loved. In his diocese he had the Premonstratensian Abbey of Newhouse, and on his return he put pressure upon the Abbot to act as his agent at Premontre, commending the excellence of the eremetical life of the Charterhouse. The Abbot and Chapter General bowed with a good

grace before the determined and effective Bishop and gave to Adam the order of release.[1] It reads :

> *"P. permissione divina Premonstrati Abbas et ejusdem ordinis Abbates in generali capitulo congregati viro venerabili A. Priori de Witham salutem et sinceram in domino caritatem. Cum pro revocando ad Ordinem nostrum fratre Adam monacho vestro quondam canonico nostro sepe laboravimus ob vite sue honestatem et suarum affluentiam literarum pro quibus ejus reditum credebamus nostro ordini cedere ad honorem, tandem videntes in vestro ordine ipsius perseverantiam ad preces venerabilis patris nostri H. Lincolniensis episcopi et dilecti in Christo fratris nostri Abbatis de Neuhus ipsum Adam vobis et Ordini vestro ab obedientia quam nostro fecit Ordini penitus reddimus absolutum. Valete."*

Adam was now a free man. In the silence of his cell he devoted himself to meditation, devotion, and the study of scripture. From his first day at Witham never, save on one specified occasion, did he ever again pass the outer gates. Within the monastery itself he knew no other path than the track between the door of his cell and the door of the church. Despite this, or perhaps because of it, his reputation continued to grow. At Witham he was not left alone, for many visitors flocked to him. He continued to preach, and in the small Carthusian Church a varied congregation heard him.

His biographer tells with natural pride of the coming of Hubert Walter, Archbishop of Canterbury from 1193 until 1205. The Metropolitan had been at Glastonbury when the Prior of Witham, Robert, prevailed upon him to visit the Carthusians, ostensibly because they desired his blessing, but actually because an opportunity was desired for their Procurator, Randolf, to put before him in congenial circumstances the Priory's case against certain woodmen regarding a pasture. Both ends were gained ; the Archbishop came and when *"factus est hillarior"* the Procurator tactfully put and gained his case. Thence the conversation passed to the nature of the Carthusian Order. Among the Archbishop's clerks were some who had known Adam or who had heard of him from S. Hugh. They told the Archbishop, and he decided to spend the night at Witham, extending his visit by a day. On the following morning he was led by the Prior into the choir where he found that the celebrant for the day was Robert FitzHenry, formerly Prior of S. Swithin's, Winchester. The Primate's heart was touched as he viewed their poverty ; he sent for a valuable cope as a donation and at the close he entered the cloister, greeting the monks with his episcopal benediction. His first

[1] *Fragment of a Witham Chronicle*, p. 22.

enquiry was for Adam. The Prior led him to the front before the Archbishop. "Holy Father," said the Carthusian, "I am Adam, a sinner, and the servant of your holiness." On this the Archbishop addressed him and requested that he might preach a sermon. It is curious that the Archbishop himself was no scholar ("*Venerabilis pater mediocriter literatis intelligencie scientia imbutus erat*"), but among his companions were many learned men who had only the highest praise for the scholarship apparent in Adam's sermon. On the Archbishop it made a different impression. At its close he led Adam by the hand back to his cell, commanding the suite to await his return. Within the cell he astonished the Carthusian by falling on his knees, weeping, and making his confession, then laying aside his garments and accepting discipline. Before departing he requested Adam to compose for him a devotional manual upon the Lord's Prayer. Thereafter he retained a connection with Adam and a special honour for his Order. He granted the Prior of Witham the privilege of immediate access to his presence, and so departed. Later, when the Prior was bound for the Chapter General, Walter carried him in his own vessel, sitting beside him in converse in the stern.

Adam seems to have entered Dryburgh soon after its foundation; he must therefore have been born about 1140 or slightly earlier. His elevation to the abbacy dates from the summer of 1184 at the earliest, if not later. The indications are that he became a Carthusian in 1188 or 1189, for we are told that at his death he had been an inmate of Witham for twenty-four years. At an advanced age he was attacked by the disease known to mediaeval doctors as "*morbus mortuus*" (Gangrene ?), and he suffered from this for close on two years. It was the time when the kingdom of John lay under the General Interdict. On Palm Sunday the Carthusians gathered about their dying brother under the Prior, Robert of Caveford, to take a last farewell. For some time he spoke to them, exhorting them to preserve love, peace, and unity. Amid tears, the brethren kissed him, received his blessing, and withdrew. On the third day of Holy Week he fell asleep. It was apparent that death was at hand, so his attendants lifted the dying man from his bed and laid him upon ashes marked with the sign of the cross as was the Carthusian wont. The convent gathered round. His breath came lightly and he passed away, more in the manner of sleep than in that of death. His body was washed and placed in its coffin, then borne into the church to be laid in front of the altar before burial. "To me, who wrote these lines," says his biographer, "all unworthy, was this task graciously committed." For more than ten years the two men had been companions in the same cell, master and student, friends and fellow worshippers. "If any ask," wrote the unknown companion, "what Master Adam was

like, I should say that he was not too tall, but a trifle stout, of a cheery countenance." With time he had grown bald, but a fringe of white hair remained. He looked, and was, a man to awaken reverence. This must have been in 1212 or 1213.

The writer adds a note on the literary remains of Adam. He knew of two large manuscript volumes which contained the sermons dating from the days when Adam was a White Canon. But Adam had written much during his time at Witham. These writings[1] produced at Witham were :—

1. *Libellus super Canonem Misse.*
2. *De Quadripartito Exercitio Cellae.*
3. *Libellus super Dominica Oratione ad Hucbertum Archiepiscopum.*
4. *Speculum Discipline.*
5. *Dialogus Magistri Adae.*
6. *Exameron.*
7. *Libellus de Consanguinitate Anne Matris Beate Marie et Beate Elizabeth Matris Beate Johannis Baptiste.*
8. *Secretum Meum Mihi.*

Unfortunately the writer at this point says that there were many other writings, but that he cannot recall them. As to the writings mentioned above, it may be said that there can be no doubt about the second. It appears in Volume 153 of the *Patrologia Latina*, there ascribed by its Jesuit editor to Guigo, the second Prior of the Grand Chartreuse of that name, although he offers this merely as a probability and awaits the possibility of further enlightenment. Apart from the title, there are marked similarities to other writings known to be by Adam. A free modern version of this appeared in 1927 under the title, *Eden's Fourfold River*. The writer's memory may have been at fault as regards the *Dialogus Magistri Adae* which is probably the *Soliloquium de Instructione Animae* written by Adam during his days at Dryburgh. This has been ascribed to Adam of S. Victor, but, other things apart, the presumption is all in favour of Adam of Dryburgh on grounds of style and the identity of many of its passages with others in the *De Ordine*. Other writings attributed to Adam are manuscript sermons in the London Charterhouse, in the British Museum, and in Trinity College, Dublin.

The writings of Adam extant and printed appear to be as follows :—

1. The 47 *Sermons* printed by Ghiselbertus. P.L. 198, col. 91-440.

[1] *Fragment of a Witham Chronicle*, p. 26.

2. *Sermones Fratris Adae*, edited by W. de Gray Birch from the Rouen MS.
3. 7 further *Sermons* in *Ad Viros Religiosos*, edited by Francois Petit.
4. *Sermon on Palm Sunday.* P.L. 184, col. 869-880.
5. *Liber de Ordine, Habitu, et Professione Canonicorum Premonstratensis Ordinis.* P.L. 198, col. 439-610.
6. *De Tripartito Tabernaculo.* P.L. 198, col. 609-792.
7. *De Triplici Genere Contemplationis.* P.L. 198, col. 791-842.
8. *Soliloquium de Instructione Animae.* P.L. 198, col. 843-872.
9. *De Quadripartito Exercitio Cellae.* P.L. 153, col. 799-884.

It is not possible to examine these here at any length. Let it be said that the central theme of the sermons is most frequently the Incarnation, and that they are written in a very competent prose style which, while far from Ciceronian, and lacking both the intensity and fiery rhetoric of such mediaeval Latin Scottish sermons as those of Thomas Livingstone, or the polished Renaissance style of those of the Cistercian Adam Elder, is superior to much mediaeval Scottish Latin.

The *Liber De Ordine* gives us a commentary on the Austin Rule which casts a measure of light upon the character of the life in the houses of the Scottish Austin Canons of the twelfth century, and which may best be compared, in Scotland, with the *Exegesis in Canonem Divi Augustini* of Robert Richardson of Cambuskenneth.

The *De Tripartito Tabernaculo*—as the name suggests—is an Old Testament study. It has an additional interest in that it contains a previously unknown letter of considerable length written by John, the Abbot of Kelso, as well as a reply by Adam. The *De Triplici Genere Contemplationis* is a mythical meditation upon the nature of God. In some ways the most readable work is the *De Instructione Animae*, a dialogue between reason and the soul. Finally, the *De Quadripartito Exercitio Cellae* is a study and defence of the Carthusian life. Thus in his various writings Adam sets forth the spiritual forces which drew the religious of his age in different directions, into active life, and into retreat. He was well read, as his contemporaries testified. In his early days and writings Augustine was his master and S. Benedict an authority frequently in mind. Among the classics he could quote Horace, Juvenal, and Ovid. Among the fathers he went to SS. Jerome, Ambrose, and Gregory. He knew Josephus, Boethius, and Bede; but he had also more recent authorities—not all quoted by name—among whom was Hugh of S.

Victor. Unexpectedly, he quotes Hippocrates. In his Carthusian days he made reference to the *Angelic Hierarchy* of Dionysius. His mind was contemplative and, like many of his time, he rejoiced in the allegorical interpretation of Scripture—with which he was widely and intimately acquainted. He knew his Bible well and it was constantly ready to his mind. His sermons, like most sermons, once preached, are not of great interest in themselves. They are notably lacking in those pungent illustrations so dear to the mediaeval preacher and to his congregation, and I suspect that, as his sermons were usually delivered extempore, those which were written for the sedulous eye of the religious reader have been purged of what, especially in his latter days, the writer may have regarded a little shamefacedly as pandering to the vulgar. As with many other sermons, it is difficult to believe that they were preached as they appear to-day, so lengthy are they; presumably—like others—they have been expanded. In one case at least—as mentioned above—a sermon was preached extempore by Adam to be written down subsequently by a member of his congregation. The mediaeval preacher was anxious to include abundant illustrations in his sermons, and it would have been hard for him to hold the attention of a lay audience had it not been so. From the various indications of his personality Adam seems a man to have revelled in the usual anecdotes, yet they are absent from his written sermons. While a clerical audience would hear a sermon in Latin it is more than doubtful whether any of his secular audiences would have made much of it. No doubt popular sermons must have been preached in the vernacular, but the reasons for such practice would be equalled by the need of using Latin in the published form. Vernacular sermons would have been little read by those who alone could read. Thus Adam's sermons, as recorded for us, appear in Latin, purged of illustrations, and probably given an increased theological content. To a modern reader they are rather dull reading, possibly as a consequence of such editing, but it should be remembered that the sermon is, by its own nature, somewhat of an ephemeral article. Designed as a spoken message, directed towards the individual listener, and related to topical as well as to eternal facts, it lacks the form and character of the written message. Thus the sermons of Spurgeon penetrated beyond their immediate audience to the great number of Victorian readers of every rank who read them weekly in their published form. Yet their day is past, and they no longer arouse a shadow of interest among that very class which once read them so avidly. They are not of our age; the secret of their success is also the secret of their neglect. So too with Adam; it is clear that his audience heard him with rapt attention and that his written sermons were in high favour, but the voice that seemed so relevant to that age has lost interest.

It certainly does not follow that the sermons were dull when first composed. All the evidence is that they moved the listener profoundly as when the Archbishop, after sermon, sought the privacy of Adam's cell to make confession and do penance.

It is by no means impossible that further writings of Adam may yet be identified, besides the attributed sermons yet in manuscript. What has been written by him fully merits examination as a revelation of the religious life of Scotland in the twelfth century, a life not fully indicated or revealed by mere ecclesiastical charters or the bare records of an annalist.